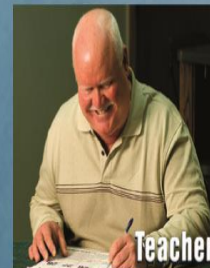
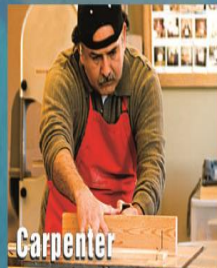


DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
DIVISION OF
SERVICE TO THE BLIND & VISUALLY IMPAIRED

BOARD OF
SERVICE TO THE
BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED
2013 ANNUAL REPORT

See
What
You Can
Do



SBVI

South Dakota
Service to
the Blind and
Visually Impaired

Mission Statement:

The mission of the Division of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired (SBVI) is to provide individualized rehabilitation services that result in optimal employment and independent living outcomes for citizens who are blind or visually impaired.

2013 Annual Report

Dear Governor Daugaard:

It is an honor for me to serve as Chair of the Board of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired (SBVI). My experiences as a citizen who is blind and a former client of the Division give me perspective regarding the value of services delivered by the Division of SBVI.



This year, once again, the Board of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired partnered with the Division of SBVI to serve as the voice of South Dakota citizens with vision loss. In this report I trust you will find that the data, program descriptions, and success stories illustrate the fact that SBVI is helping to positively change the lives of South Dakotans who are blind or visually impaired.

Activities of the Board of SBVI in 2013 included:

1. Consumer satisfaction surveys for the vocational rehabilitation and independent living programs.
2. Public meetings to develop state plan goals and strategies to improve services delivered by SBVI.
3. Review of assistive technology and other employment services delivered by the Division of SBVI.
4. Addressing public relations to ensure the public is aware of services and the capabilities of citizens who are blind or visually impaired.
5. Partnering with the Board of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Statewide Independent Living Council and other entities for events including the Governor's Awards recognizing employment of people with disabilities and activities for National Employment Disability Awareness month in October.

The Board of SBVI facilitates public meetings and client satisfaction surveys as required by the Rehabilitation Act. In addition, we review data, jointly formulate state goals and applicable strategies. The Board's input ensures services to underserved populations and improvements to programs resulting in better services that lead to quality employment and independent living outcomes for citizens who are blind or visually impaired.

As Chair of the Board of SBVI, I wish to express my appreciation for your support and applaud you for addressing employment of South Dakota citizens with disabilities through your "Employment Works" initiative. The Board of SBVI would welcome the opportunity to assist with activities related to this important project.

Respectfully,

Marilyn Steffen, Chair

Board of SBVI

CC: Julya Doyle, RSA State Liaison

Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	Page 2
Board of SBVI Members.....	Page 3
Board of SBVI Activities and Priorities	Page 4
Vocational Rehabilitation Summary.....	Page 7
Independent Living Blind Program Summary.....	Page 14
Rehabilitation Center for the Blind Summary.....	Page 20
Business Enterprise Program.....	Page 24
SBVI Office Locations and Contact Information.....	Page 26

Executive Summary

It is my honor to present the 2013 Board of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired (SBVI) Annual Report. The information provided gives a snapshot of the services provided and the work of the Board and Division of SBVI in the past year. The dedication of SBVI Board Members and staff of the Division ensures that services are delivered in the most comprehensive and efficient manner leading to the successes of those we serve.

SBVI's primary purpose is to assist citizens who are blind or visually impaired to increase their independence and prepare for and obtain employment. You'll find a variety of useful information in this report from caseload data to information about programs and services. You'll also find comments from consumers and success stories that highlight the positive effect SBVI services have had on their lives.

Members of the Board of SBVI bring experience from a variety of perspectives. Whether current or former consumers, service providers and a variety of other backgrounds, members bring insight and experience to help us to improve services. I would also like to acknowledge the collective work of the dedicated professionals in SBVI who deliver the programs, services and outcomes addressed in this report. Thank you for taking the time to read this report to learn about SBVI services and the difference they make in the lives of citizens of South Dakota.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gaye Mattke, Director
SD Service to the Blind & Visually Impaired

Board of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired

The Board of SBVI is the State Rehabilitation Council for SBVI as defined in the Rehabilitation Act as amended. Board members provide advice to improve services for South Dakota citizens served by SBVI. Requirements for composition are defined by the Rehabilitation Act and include a minimum of 15 members, of whom 50% must be blind or visually impaired*. Members are appointed by the Governor of South Dakota.

Name	Hometown	Representation
Marilyn Steffen– Chair	Yankton	Business and Industry
Eric Rippentrop - Vice Chair	Dell Rapids	Disability Advocacy Group
Karla Bucknall – Member At Large	Rapid City	Business and Industry
Linda Biffert	Volga	Disability Advocacy Group
Robert Kean	Pierre	Client Assistance Program
Gaye Mattke	Pierre	SBVI Director– Ex Officio
Steve Kelsey	Aberdeen	VR Counselor– Ex Officio
Connie Sullivan	Pierre	State Education Agency
Ken Rollman	Rapid City	Statewide IL Council
Patrick Czerny	Piedmont	Community Rehab Program
Lyle Cook	Eagle Butte	Native American VR
Bill Molseed	Pierre	Workforce Development Council
Bruce Micheel	Cavour	Business and Industry
Julie Briggs	Sioux Falls	Business and Industry
Teresa Nold	Sioux Falls	Parent Connection
Lynda O'Connor - Ohayon	Sioux Falls	Business and Industry
Daniel Weischedel	Sturgis	Disability Advocacy Group
Ed Pinkman - Term Expired	Aberdeen	Disability Advocacy Group
Charles Fullenkamp -Term Expired	Rapid City	Community Rehab Program

*Board makeup is based on federal law, the Rehabilitation Act as amended. Seven members of the Board have been consumers of services and eight members are blind or visually impaired. The experience of Board members brings insight for improving services and addressing gaps in service delivery.

Board of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired

Board Activities

Meetings – The Board meets as often as necessary (determined by the Chairperson in cooperation with the Director of SBVI), but at least four times per year. Meetings during the report period were held on the following dates and locations:

December 7, 2012: Pierre, SD

April 5, 2013: Pierre, SD

June 21, 2013: Pierre, SD

September 27, 2013: Sioux Falls, SD

Meetings are open to the public and held at accessible locations. Meetings are announced via the SBVI website, in the VISIONS newsletter, on the State of South Dakota news website, and through a variety of publications throughout the state. Meeting dates are determined by the Board; agendas and minutes are posted on the SBVI website at: <http://dhs.sd.gov/sbvi/boardsbvi.aspx>

Governor's Awards for Employment of People with Disabilities – The annual Governor's Awards recognize the efforts of individuals, employers, and organizations for their contributions to the employment of people with disabilities. This event is a joint effort of the Board of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired, the Board of Vocational Rehabilitation (BVR), and the Department of Human Services. A member of the Board of SBVI serves on the committee that reviews nominations and selects award recipients.

National Disability Employment Awareness Month Activities – The BVR, the Board of SBVI, and the respective divisions in the Department of Human Services plan activities in communities across the state to increase awareness of the capabilities of individuals with disabilities to work. The Board of SBVI voted to contribute to the events in 2013. A member of the Board of SBVI has been invited to serve on the BVR committee that approves the activities and funding for the events.

White Cane Awareness Day – Events in Sioux Falls on October 12th, White Cane Day, included opening statements by the Mayor and police force, a walk down Phillips Avenue, distribution of pins and brochures, and concluded with refreshments and a panel discussion at the City Library. A staff person at the SD Rehabilitation Center for the Blind is a member of the White Cane Planning committee.



Board of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired

Public Meetings - The Board of SBVI recommends dates, locations, and formats for annual public meetings to solicit input on services and to discuss service options with current and former consumers, as well as the public. In 2013, SBVI board members facilitated meetings held on April 19 in Rapid City, April 25 (videoconference/ teleconference with sites in Aberdeen, Pierre, Rapid City, and Sioux Falls), and May 7 in the Mobridge area. Over 450 individuals were notified by mail of these opportunities to offer input on SBVI services and the SBVI State Plan, and announcements were included in all local papers. The South Dakota Association of the Blind (SDAB) and National Federation of the Blind of South Dakota (NFB) hosted the public meetings held in Rapid City and the videoconference held in Aberdeen, Pierre, Rapid City and Sioux Falls. A variety of topics were discussed during the meetings, including the following:

- The value of the older blind peer support groups;
- The need for transportation to assist people in getting to work;
- The importance of assistive technology and training, including the need to educate employers on how assistive technology can people with vision impairments in the workplace;
- The importance of continuing to maximize job opportunities for individuals with vision impairments;
- The value and contributions of the Braille and Talking Book Program; and
- The benefits of ongoing awareness, education, and mentoring programs for people who are blind or have impaired vision.

Board Committees

Executive Committee – The Executive Committee consists of the Board Chair, Vice Chair and Member at Large. The Executive Committee plans agendas for Board meetings and handles decisions between regularly scheduled meetings and other activities assigned by the Board.

Strategic Planning and Policy Development Committee – This committee provides input on strategic planning and policy development. The committee evaluates state plan updates, consumer satisfaction surveys, and SBVI policy revisions. Recommendations from the committee are brought to the full Board.

Public Relations Committee – The Public Relations Committee recommends activities to promote the programs and services offered by SBVI and assists SBVI in designing and conducting outreach activities.

Assistive Technology Advisory Committee (ATAC) – ATAC is comprised of individuals who are knowledgeable about the latest innovations in assistive technology. In conjunction with the Board, ATAC advises SBVI in matters concerning assistive technology for SBVI consumers and staff.

Board of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired

State Plan Goals

The Board and Division of SBVI jointly developed the following goals along with strategies to address each goal. Reports of progress on the goals and strategies are developed annually for submission with the state plan to Rehabilitation Services Administration .

1. Improve the earnings, benefits, and career advancement for consumers served by SBVI.
2. Develop outreach methods so that referral sources, employers, and citizens who are blind or visually impaired are aware of the unique services provided by SBVI.
3. Ensure that Vocational Rehabilitation consumers receive services that allow for informed choice and help them to improve their ability to communicate, interact, and perform to their potential in their community.
4. Strengthen the agency's ability to provide quality services to the ever-changing minority populations that exist in South Dakota.
5. Provide quality transition services to eligible students that facilitate the students' movement from school to post-secondary education and/or employment and results in successful employment.

2014 promises to be an exciting year with many activities planned to address employment and independent living services for citizens who are blind. The Board and Division will participate in a comprehensive statewide needs assessment and utilize that information to re-evaluate goals and strategies for service provision. Public meetings and disability summits to share information are already in the works and will be announced early in the New Year.

In addition, the Board and Division of SBVI will participate in activities related to the Governor's Employment Works task force. Promoting employment of citizens with significant vision loss and educating employers on the capabilities of employees who are blind or have a significant visual impairment will continue to be a priority.

Vocational Rehabilitation Program

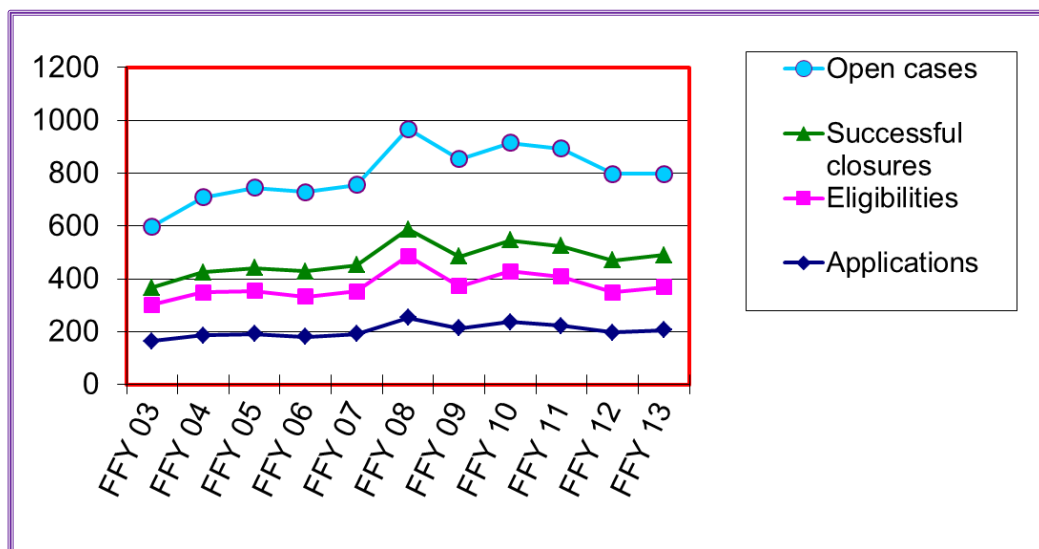
The mission of the Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired (SBVI) Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Program is to provide individualized rehabilitation services that result in optimal employment outcomes for citizens who are blind or visually impaired.

Fiscal Year 2013 Performance

- 534 individuals were served through the SBVI VR Program during Federal Fiscal Year 2013 (FFY 13).
- 121 individuals were successfully rehabilitated through the vocational rehabilitation program.
- 95% of the individuals whose cases were closed successfully had significant disabilities.
- The average hourly wage was \$12.14 and the annual income was \$20,633.08 for individuals who obtained or maintained employment through the vocational rehabilitation program.

SBVI Vocational Rehabilitation Caseload Summary

The chart below illustrates consumers served through the SBVI Vocational Rehabilitation Program over the past several years. The growth of the program in the past 10 years is due in part to the diligence of SBVI in reaching those who need vocational rehabilitation services.



Vocational Rehabilitation Program

Federal Program Evaluation Standards

The Federal Government measures vocational rehabilitation agency performance in part by using six “Standard 1” performance indicators. SBVI’s performance on each indicator is illustrated on the corresponding chart. SBVI has exceeded all six of the Standard 1 indicators for the past ten years (FY 2002 thru FY 2012). The indicators are the Division’s “report card”; SBVI is the only agency for the blind in the nation to meet or exceed all six Standard 1 indicators throughout this time span.

Standard 1: Employment Outcomes

- 1.1 The number of successful case closures compared to the preceding two years’ number of successful closures.
- 1.2 The percentage of individuals exiting the program during the performance period who have achieved an employment outcome after receiving services.
- 1.3 The percentage of consumers who exit the SBVI VR Program in competitive employment at or above the state minimum wage.
- 1.4 The percentage of individuals who have significant disabilities who obtain competitive employment at or above the state minimum wage.
- 1.5 The ratio of average hourly earnings of all individuals successfully closed to the average hourly earnings of all employed individuals in the state.
- 1.6 The difference in the percentage of individuals at application versus closure who reported their income as the largest single source of support.

FY 2012 SBVI Performance on Standard 1 Performance Indicators

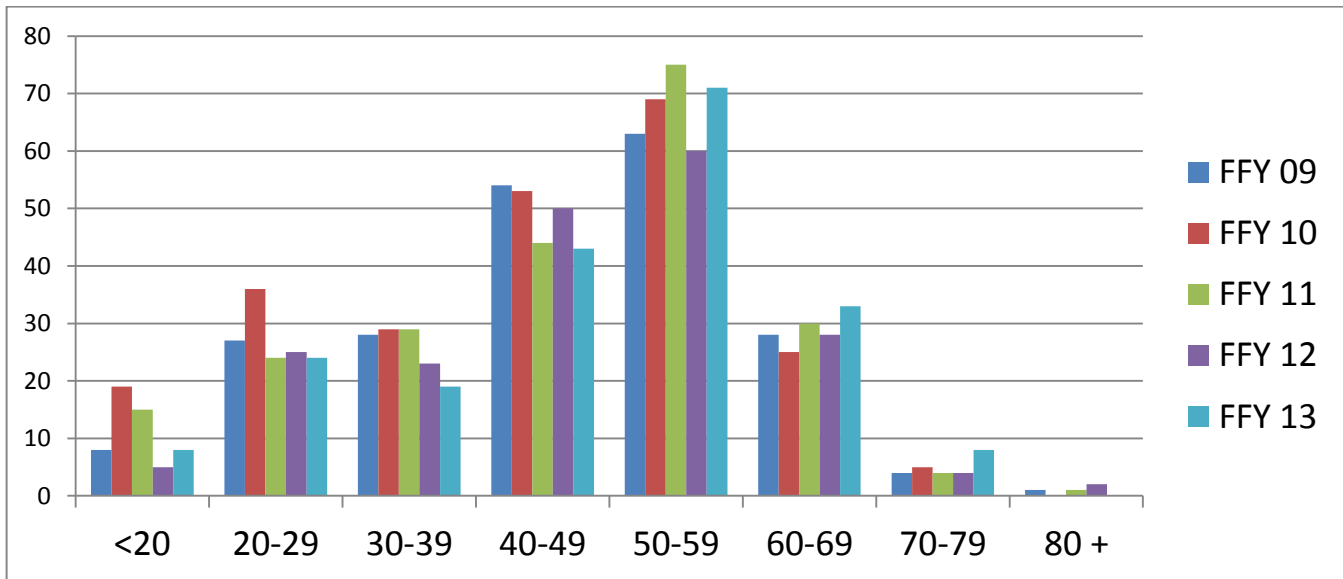
Indicator	Minimum Requirement	Division Performance
Standard 1: Employment Outcomes	Meet 4 of the 6 Indicators	6 of the 6 Indicators Were Met
Indicator 1.1	228	235
Indicator 1.2	68.90%	71.65%
Indicator 1.3	35.40%	97.45%
Indicator 1.4	89.00%	99.56%
Indicator 1.5	0.59	0.675
Indicator 1.6	30.40%	32.31

- FY 2013 official performance data is not yet available.

Vocational Rehabilitation Program

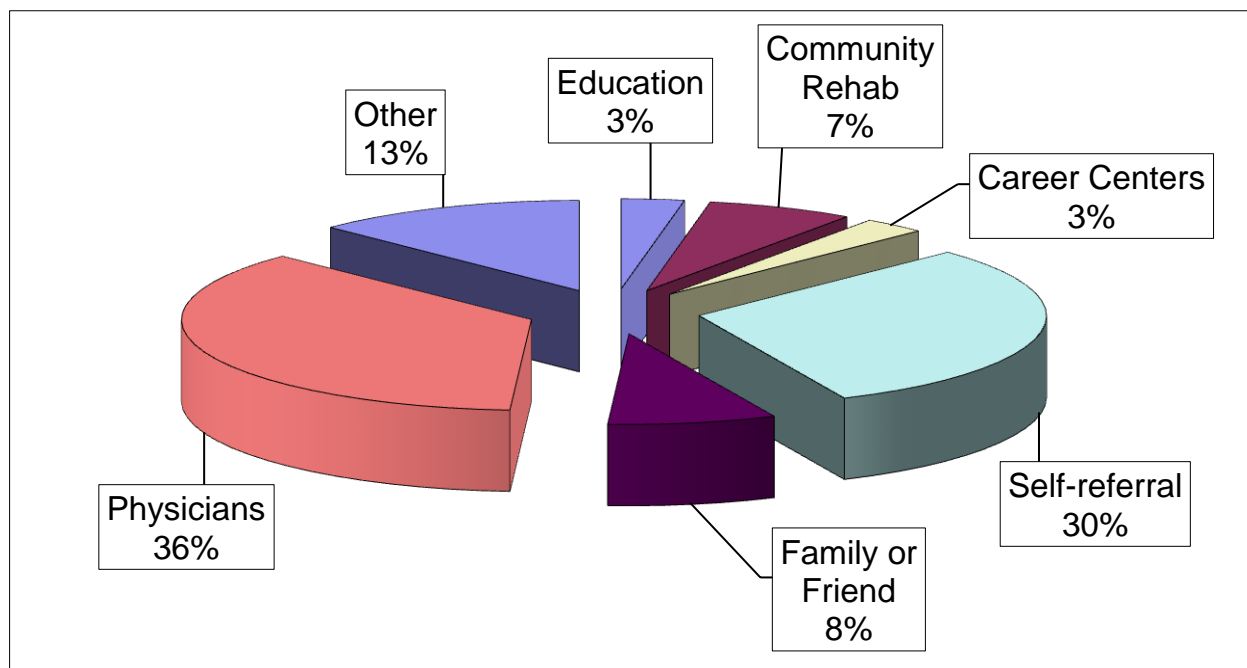
Consumer Demographics

The following graph illustrates the age groups of VR applicants. Although SBVI takes applications from individuals from age 14 on, historically the majority of applicants who apply for services are between the ages of 50 to 59 due to the progressive nature of vision loss.



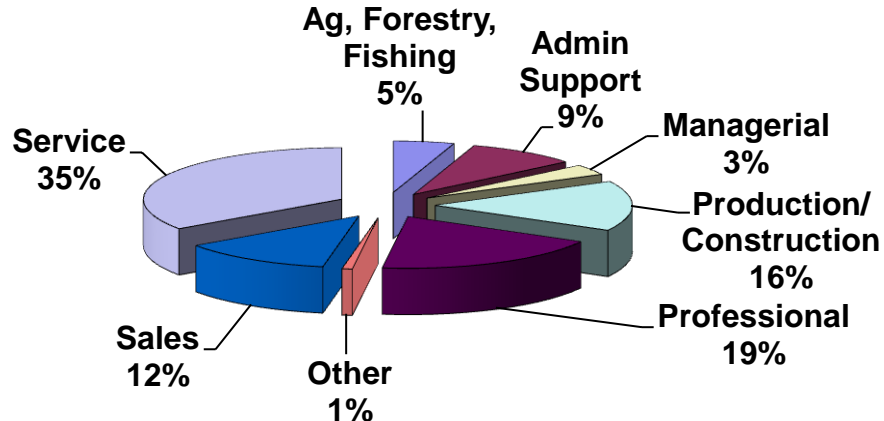
Sources of Referrals for Applicants

The following chart demonstrates that physicians and self-referrals make up two-thirds of the referrals to the SBVI Vocational Rehabilitation Program.



Vocational Rehabilitation Program

Occupations of Individuals Successfully Closed



The occupations of successfully employed consumers in this chart reflect labor market trends with a majority of jobs in service industries and sales (47%). Managerial and professional jobs were 21% of successful closures in 2013.

Services to Minorities

According to the 2010 census, South Dakota's minority (non-white) population was 14.1%. The largest minority group in South Dakota involves American Indians from nine South Dakota Tribes making up approximately 9% (8.8% according to 2010 U.S. Census data) of the state's total population. In FY 2013, 15.1% of SBVI closures were comprised of individuals of American Indian descent, and 23.1% of all closures reported coming from a minority background, exceeding census data for minorities in the general population of the state.

The Board and Division work to address culturally relevant services to minority populations through a number of initiatives. Strategies from the state plan attachment 4.11(d) for 2013 specifically address services to minorities with the following activities:

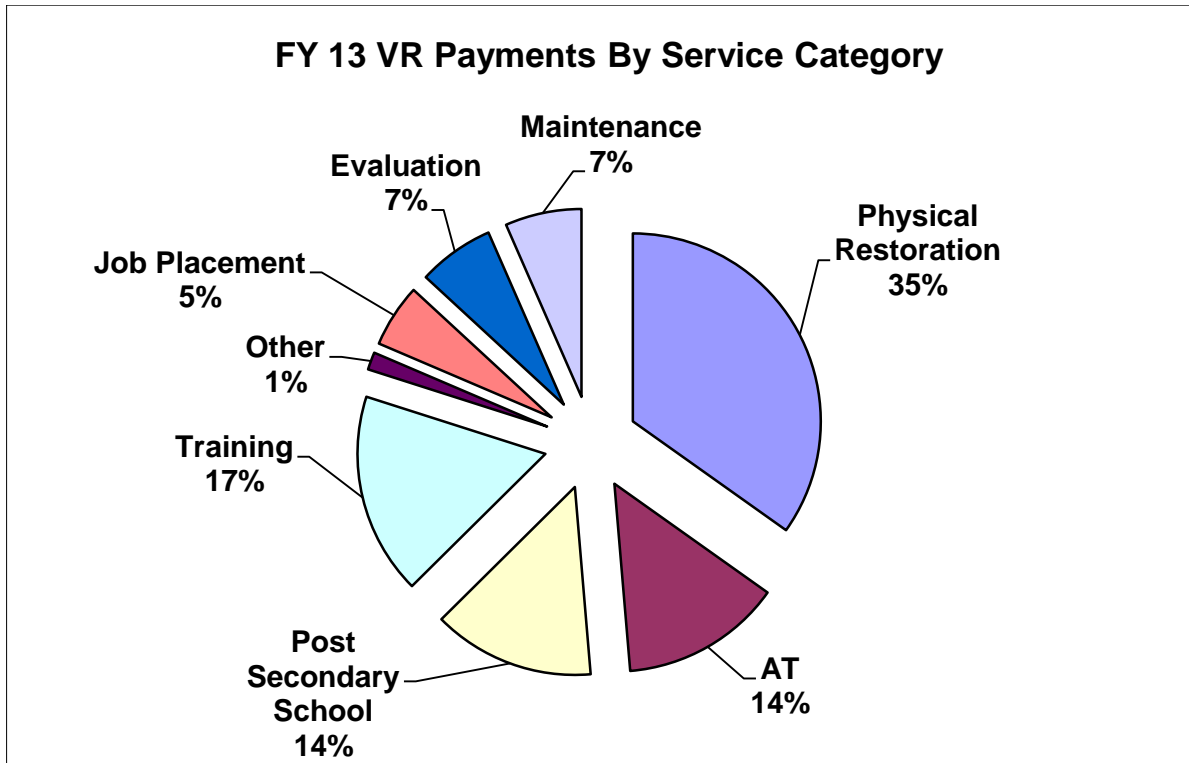
- Design and disseminate outreach materials and participate in activities that target employers to educate them on the capabilities of people who are blind or visually impaired.
- Annually conduct two or more activities that promote services for citizens with vision loss including those from minority backgrounds.
- Provide annual training and materials for staff to train them to market services to targeted audiences.
- Annually review and update outreach materials and procedures that staff utilize to promote services to referral sources, employers and other entities.

SBVI developed a radio ad in Lakota for distribution on the state's Tribal lands. In addition, activities are conducted on Tribal lands annually to share information and identify service needs.

Vocational Rehabilitation Program

Vocational Rehabilitation Purchased Services Analysis

In FY 2013 SBVI spent over \$1,018,000 on client services for vocational rehabilitation consumers. As shown by the pie chart below, physical restoration, assistive technology (AT), training, and post-secondary services constitute three-quarters of the total expenditures.



SBVI VR Program – Consumer Satisfaction Survey Analysis

FY 2013 marks the fifth year that SBVI has partnered with the Board of SBVI to conduct a consumer satisfaction survey using the SBVI Client Satisfaction Questionnaire-8 (CSQ-8) survey. The survey was sent to 157 individuals who received services and were closed from the SBVI Vocational Rehabilitation Program. Fifty-seven surveys were returned for a response rate of 36%. The survey consists of eight core questions and an additional seven questions that were developed with the help of the Board of SBVI. As with previous years, the overall consumer satisfaction mean was very high at 28.46 out of a possible 32, with a standard deviation of 4.6. Survey participants we asked directly “In an overall, general sense, how satisfied are you with the service you received?” 86% of participants indicated that they were very satisfied with the service they received from SBVI.



Vocational Rehabilitation Program

Found below is a summary of the 259 responses through the five years of the CSQ-8. The responses illustrate that the large majority of individuals are consistently pleased with the service they receive from SBVI.

1. How would you rate the quality of service you received?

92% of respondents answered “excellent” or “good”.

2. Did you get the kind of service you wanted?

91% answered “yes, definitely” or “yes, generally”.

3. To what extent has our program met your needs?

89% answered “almost all” or “most” of their needs had been met.

4. If a friend were in need of similar help, would you recommend our program to him/her?

97% answered “yes, definitely” or “yes, I think so”.

5. How satisfied are you with the amount of help you received?

89% answered “very satisfied” or “mostly satisfied”.

6. Have the services you received helped you to deal more effectively with your problems?

94% answered “yes, they helped a great deal” or “yes, they helped somewhat”.

7. In an overall, general sense, how satisfied are you with the service you received?

90% answered “very satisfied” or “mostly satisfied”.

8. If you were to seek help again, would you come back to our program?

96% answered “yes, definitely” or “yes, I think so”.



Vocational Rehabilitation Program

VR Program- Consumer Satisfaction Consumer Comments

To understand the impact of vocational rehabilitation, it is important to not only look at the program's performance in terms of data, but also to see the comments that individuals share. These are quotes from consumer satisfaction surveys:

- "Alan was very helpful. Could not say enough good things about him and his team!"
- "They helped me so much, especially so I could keep my job."
- "The services were excellent all the way around."
- "I was very happy to be in this program. They helped me a lot. Need no improvements, everything works satisfactorily."
- "I could not have asked for better service."

Vocational Rehabilitation Success Story

Thomas was a student at the South Dakota School for the Blind and Visually Impaired. In 2001 he was a sophomore in high school, and it was at that time he applied for Vocational Rehabilitation services through SBVI.

As a transition student, he was excited about having the opportunity to participate in Project Skills to obtain his first paid work experience. His job was at Spurs, a therapeutic horse riding program that works with individuals with physical disabilities. Thomas really enjoyed this job, and it was here he learned compassion and an understanding of working with young adults. His next work experience was with Pizza Hut. In fact, due to his hard work and dedication, Pizza Hut hired Thomas the following year.

Upon graduation in May 2007, Thomas was undecided about what he wanted to do in life so he continued working at Pizza Hut. He found this to be unfulfilling and made a decision to join the Job Corps where he continued his training for the next two years.

His goal was to become a correction officer; unfortunately because this position required a valid driver's license, he continued to be unsuccessful in obtaining employment. Thomas and his counselor still felt this goal was obtainable so Thomas decided to pursue getting his driver's license. He was referred to the Avera Drive Smart Program in Aberdeen. A low vision evaluation was completed and with the use of bi-optics he was able to legally obtain his driver's license.

Once again he pursued his employment search. In November 2012, he achieved his employment goal and was hired by the Roberts County Sheriff's Department and continues to be employed there to this day.

Independent Living Blind Program

U.S. Census Bureau data shows people are more likely to live 100 years or longer in South Dakota. Data released in 2012 shows South Dakota ranks second in the nation with 2.95 centenarians per 10,000 people. The SBVI Independent Living (IL) Program provided services to 8 individuals over 100 in 2013. The risk of developing an eye disease has been found to increase significantly with age, particularly in those over age 65. Experts predict that by 2030, rates of vision loss will double along with the country's aging population.

The goal for any person who accesses independent living services is to increase independence by making the most of their residual vision by learning skills to compensate for barriers caused by vision loss. Services provided by SBVI Rehabilitation Teachers help those served to make the most of their remaining vision leading to improvement in their quality of life. Services provided by the IL Blind Program are based on each person's desires and goals for maintaining their independence. The services listed below define the training areas that were provided to those eligible for the Independent Living Blind (ILB) Program and the number of individuals who participated in the service in FY 2013.

Skills Training

<i>Type of Service and Description</i>	<i>Number of People</i>
Communication Skills – Training in the use of the telephone, handwriting guides, telling time, reading or writing Braille, etc.	399
Daily Living Skills – Training in the use of adaptive aids and assistive technology for daily living.	367
Low Vision Device Training – Services related to the use of optical aids and devices.	365
Low Vision Aids – May include items such as canes, insulin gauges, CCTVs, magnifiers, adaptive cooking items, etc.	399
Counseling – Peer, individual, or group counseling to assist with adjustment to visual impairment and blindness.	320
Low Vision Exams – Evaluations to identify strategies and devices for enhancing visual performance.	307
Advocacy Training – Participation in advocacy training activities such as consumer organization meetings and peer support groups.	106
Referral to Other Agencies – Information and referral to other service providers, programs, and agencies.	198
Orientation and Mobility – Travel training and learning to access public or private transportation to travel safely and independently.	97

Independent Living Blind Program

- In FY 2013, the ILB Program provided services to 458 elderly blind individuals compared to 503 in FY 2012. Staff successfully closed 258 individual cases compared to 281 individuals in FY 2012.
- In addition to providing services to older citizens who have moderate to severe vision loss, the ILB Program provided services to 17 individuals under the age of 55 who required independent-living-skills training due to their vision loss.
- According to the National Eye Institute, age-related macular degeneration affects more than 1.75 million individuals in the United States. The following is a list of functional limitations for types of eye disease:

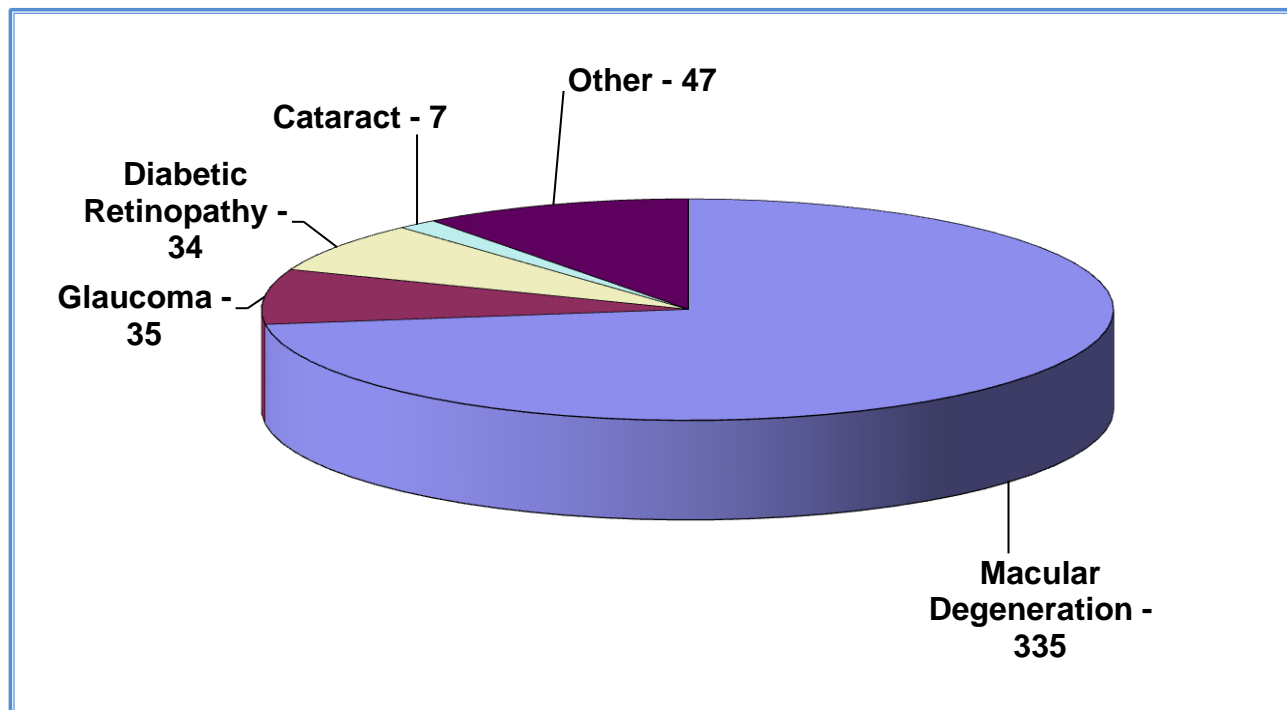
<i>Type of Eye Disease</i>	<i>Consumer will have difficulties with:</i>
Age-related Macular Degeneration	Reading regular print, inability to recognize faces, distortion or disappearance of central vision, reduced color vision, reduced contrast perception, walking or balance problems related to loss of depth and color contrast.
Diabetic Retinopathy	Tasks requiring fine-detail vision such as reading, distorted central vision, fluctuating vision, loss of color perception, walking or balance problems due to loss of depth and color contrast. (In severe cases, total blindness can occur.)
Glaucoma	Walking or balance problems and reading problems due to restricted visual fields as well as people suddenly appearing in the visual field. (In severe cases, total blindness can occur.)
Cataract	Detail vision, bright and changing light levels, reduced color vision, decreased contrast perception, walking or balance problems related to loss of depth and contrast cues. (This condition is remedied by lens removal in 90% of cases.)



An example of how macular degeneration distorts central vision.

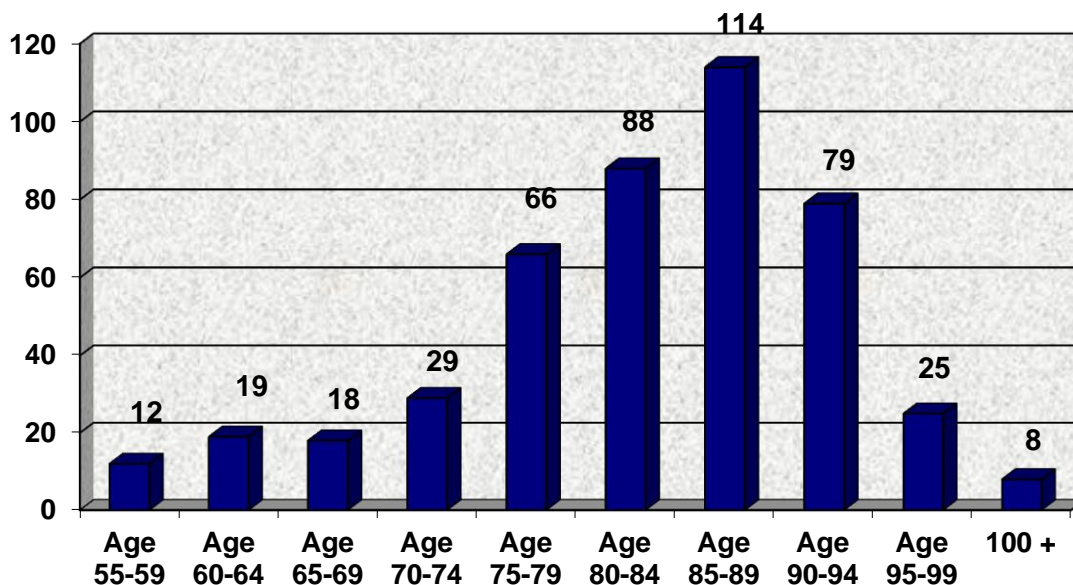
Independent Living Blind Program

Primary Types of Eye Disease for People Served – ILB



In South Dakota, Macular Degeneration was reported as the major cause of vision loss in 335 of the 458 individuals served by the ILB Program.

Age Range of ILB Individuals Served in FY 2013



The target population for the Independent Living Blind Program is individuals over the age of 55. In 2013, 68% (314 individuals) of the 458 people served were over the age of 80, with 8 of them over the age of 100.

Independent Living Blind Program

Solutions for Vision Loss

Jerome contacted SBVI after being told about the Independent Living Program by his eye doctor. Jerome had been trying his best to adapt to his vision loss, but felt that he was relying too much on his wife for tasks he wanted to accomplish independently. During my first visit with Jerome, I identified him as a veteran and spoke with him about the Veteran's Administration (VA) in Sioux Falls. Jerome was very hesitant to become involved with the VA, so I further explained the benefits that could be available to him. Jerome contemplated, and did give me permission to refer him to the VA for low vision services.

Meanwhile, I continued to visit Jerome in his home to identify the services necessary there. Jerome received the digital Talking Book Player for leisure time. I trained Jerome and his wife in the sighted guide technique, since walking through crowds had been an obstacle. Jerome needed markings on his kitchen appliances to set them properly, and markings on his medication bottles to identify them.

As time passed, Jerome kept me updated on his progress with the VA Low Vision services. He grew fond of the VA after coming into contact with the compassionate people who were there to help him succeed. Jerome was provided training at the VA on a number of aids and devices. I was able to follow-up with Jerome at his home to provide additional support, to make sure the devices were used properly, and to answer further questions that he had. Jerome received the following low vision aids from the VA: a desktop CCTV and a portable electronic magnifier for reading, yellow keyboard overlays and the ZoomText program for his computer, a talking calculator for his finances, a large button telephone, glare control filters, and a handheld magnifier. Each device has given him the ability to accomplish his goals of independence.

Jerome was thankful to the Independent Living program for connecting him to the VA. If the two programs were not in close contact with each other, Jerome would have never been aware of the benefits available to him.

Consumer Satisfaction

Consumers in the ILB Program have the opportunity to provide feedback through a consumer satisfaction survey. Their responses assist SBVI in understanding if the consumer felt the services were effective in assisting them to maintain or regain their independence.

Frequently the survey responses include statements expressing gratitude for services and SBVI staff that provided training. Following are some comments received from consumers completing the surveys:



Independent Living Blind Program

- “My worker was very helpful and took her time explaining everything about the program. Thank you.”
- “The lighted magnifier helps. I can’t read without it. I guess there isn’t much more they can do unless they can cure macular degeneration.”
- “I really adore the large magnifier for reading. Both magnifiers have really improved my reading abilities”
- “Nancy referred me to the VA and I got equipment from them to help with my sight problems. It was much appreciated.”
- “Orientation and Mobility in the community environment was what I needed and appreciated!”
- “I was very pleased and happy with everything and it has been a great help to me. Thank you so much!”

The survey respondents were asked if they would have considered moving into a facility with a higher level of care without services from the ILB Program. Twenty-five percent (38 individuals) who responded to the survey stated that they had considered moving to a facility, but were able to remain in their home because of services from SBVI Rehabilitation Teachers.

Information and Referral

Information and referral is a critical aspect of the Independent Living Program by providing people with specific information to determine if they would like to access the services, magnification devices and critical training to assist with their independence. Information and referral provides citizens the opportunity to ask questions pertinent to their unique situation; and then to decide when their vision loss experience may require access to training to develop skills to maintain their independence. In addition, Rehabilitation Teachers refer to other service providers to assist with each individual’s unique circumstances.

Rehabilitation Teachers regularly provide information and referral services to the people of South Dakota by attending events in communities including the South Dakota State Fair, community health fairs, employee in-service events or other public forums. In addition to these events, they respond to individual calls and office visits in a timely manner to ensure people obtain the information they need to access Independent Living and other services. In 2013, Rehabilitation Teachers provided information and referral services to 855 people and participated in 62 local events or presentations across the state.



Independent Living Blind Program

Solutions for Vision Loss

Roberta had been dealing with vision loss from Macular Degeneration for a few years. After being told by several doctors that there was nothing they could do to help, Roberta began to lose hope. She was hesitant, but made the call to SBVI. The staff informed her of the Independent Living program and explained that a Rehabilitation Teacher would contact her.

After arranging a time, I met with Roberta in her home. I discovered that she had wonderful support from her daughter who she lives with. Roberta was feeling uneasy about losing the ability to do some things on her own and having to rely on her daughter's help. During our first conversation, we were able to identify some of the struggles that have led to Roberta's loss of independence. I reassured her that there were techniques, skills, aids and devices that could be shown to allow her to achieve her goals. Roberta was gracious and relieved.

Roberta was able to attend a low vision exam at the Rehabilitation Center for the Blind. She was enthusiastic about gaining more knowledge of her vision loss and the things that were helpful to her. Most of all, she was impressed by the compassion shown to her by Dr. Greenfield.

During a series of home visits with Roberta, I was able to provide training in the use of magnification, lighting, and glare control. Roberta was able to borrow some devices to determine the ones that worked best for her. I was also able to show her some skills of blindness such as how to use stairs safely, plug in appliances, and use writing guides. Roberta now works with a handheld magnifier for spot reading labels, recipes, menus, and other tasks. She is able to continue to crochet with a hands-free magnifier. Roberta doesn't struggle with glare after discovering plum colored filters that she uses indoors and out.

In addition to training, the Independent Living program educated Roberta on the types of services available to her now and in the future. She was told about other programs such as the CCTV lease option, the talking book service, and audible devices. Overall, the Independent Living program services gave Roberta hope that she is still able to accomplish tasks that she thought were impossible with vision loss.



Magnifiers at the SD Rehabilitation Center for the Blind Low Vision Clinic

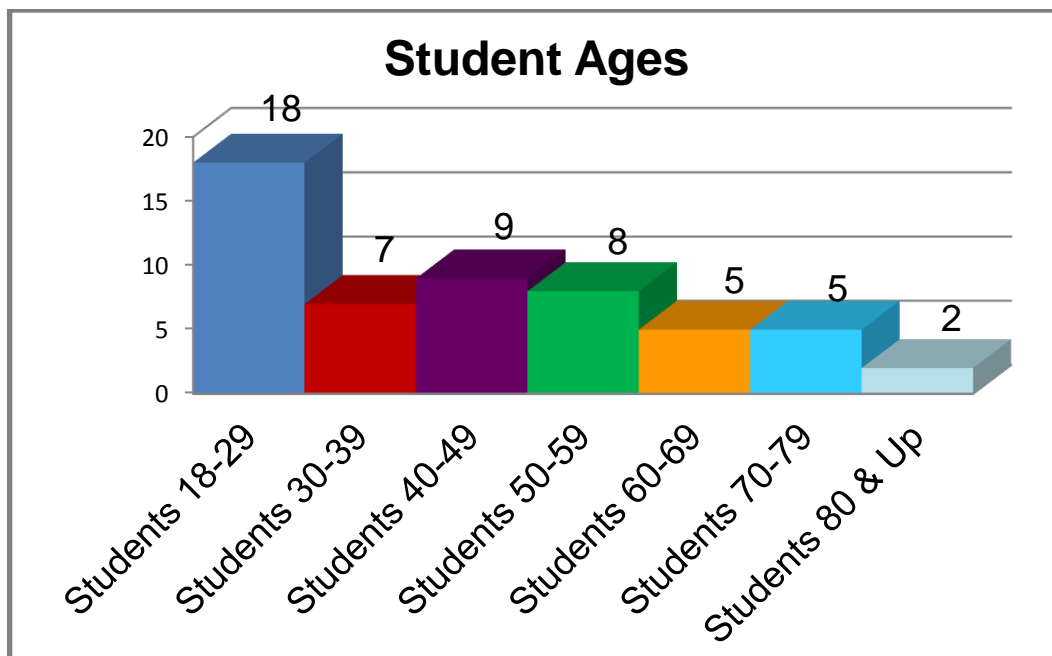
Rehabilitation Center for the Blind

SKILLS OF BLINDNESS

The SD Rehabilitation Center for the Blind (SDRC) Skills of Blindness training allows people to gain independence after they have experienced life-changing vision loss. Work opportunities increase for people with visual impairments when they learn the independent living and employment skills to overcome barriers caused by vision loss. A team of dedicated staff at SDRC teach and support students as they attend classes and proceed through the training opportunities available to them. Class options include Braille and communications, home management, computers and assistive technology, and orientation and mobility.



The following graph reflects that during FY 2013 the largest age group of students was 18-29 years old. In 2012 the average age of students was 48 years old.



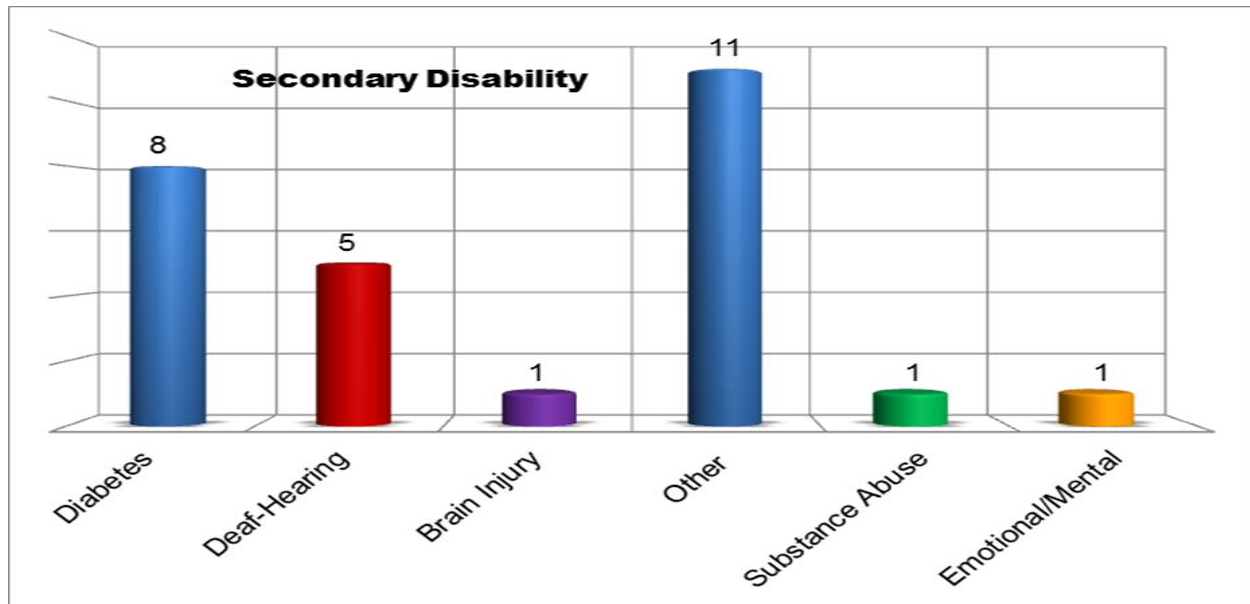
SDRC served 54 people, 31 men and 23 women, who participated in training for an average of 3 months. Students typically attend a 2-week evaluation and through this process are able to develop goals and begin planning the support and training to achieve their goals. After the evaluation period is over a plan is developed that identifies training needed to help students to meet their vocational and independent living goals. Each month during training student progress meetings are held to evaluate progress and set new goals if the student chooses. Students are routinely provided feedback and offered the choice of how they would like to proceed to achieve their goals.

Rehabilitation Center for the Blind

People Served at the Rehabilitation Center for the Blind

Services	FY 2013	FY 2012	FY 2011
Skills of Blindness	54	59	45
Employment Specialists	27	38	50
Transition Students	4	7	10
Low Vision Clients	86	99	96
Employment Skills Training	79	125	130

During FY13 numerous students attended classes who had secondary disabilities along with vision loss. The impact of each individual's disabilities is important to consider when designing individualized training. Common conditions range from diabetes, traumatic brain injury, deafness or hearing loss, mental illness, and substance abuse, as well as physical, intellectual and cognitive disabilities which are included in the "other" category on the following chart.



The SDRC provides services to people from across the state; with the largest number of students from the southeast corner of South Dakota. Training occurs year round at SDRC but the busiest months are June through September.

The ability to utilize computer technology is a valuable skill in today's world. Students are introduced to various types of technology such as computers, tablets, accessible phones, and GPS devices. SDRC demonstrates both Apple and Microsoft products, to ensure that learning fits the personal choice of the students.

After students complete skills of blindness training, they are encouraged to call the staff with questions. Instructors at the SDRC are creative with their problem solving techniques and use a variety of communication methods to assist former students after they return to their communities. During 2013, one teacher assisted 18 former students with computer related questions via FaceTime, Skype, email, and by telephone.

Transition Week

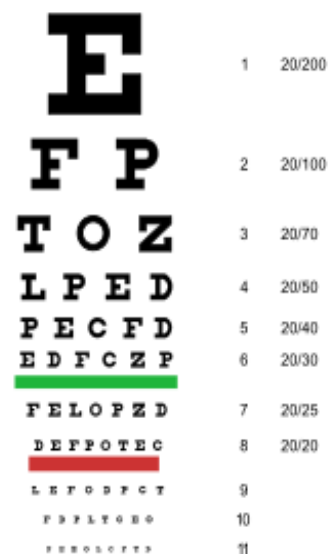
Transition Week is an annual summer youth program which brings high school students together from around South Dakota to experience opportunities at SDRC. The objective is to build skills and confidence through work and community involvement. During the summer of 2013 four high school students attended to learn about employment and post-secondary options. Students with commitments to work declined the opportunity to attend Transition Week, which reduced the number of students attending compared to previous years. The students volunteered at a nursing home, attended a job shadow experience, met employers, and toured post-secondary institutions. Transition Week is an opportunity to introduce students to information that will help them to prepare for work or college. Transition week is also a social opportunity where friendships are developed and renewed.

Pictured below: Students attending Transition Week 2013 had a guided tour of Avera McKennan Hospital with Julie Benz, AVP, Ortho/Neuro Rehab, pictured above.



Prevention of Blindness Vision Screening

The Prevention of Blindness program offered through SDRC provides vision screening machines to service groups and schools, who, along with volunteers, screen children and adults for vision-related issues. In 2013, 933 people were screened and 90 of those were referred to eye doctors for further evaluation. The units were primarily utilized by service clubs such as local Lion clubs for health fairs and small school districts.



Rehabilitation Center for the Blind

Low Vision Clinics

A local optometrist contracts with SBVI to provide low vision examinations and recommendations for low vision devices. The SBVI low vision therapist provides training to patients to use devices such as magnifiers, electronic magnifying devices, and absorptive lenses. The SDRC conducted 18 low vision clinics and examinations were provided to 86 clients in 2013, a decrease of 13 from the previous year. Due to recent turnover in Rehabilitation Teaching Staff referrals were reduced compared to recent years. The average age of patients was 66 and the oldest patient attending the low vision clinic was 100 years old.



South Dakota Vocational Resources

The SD Vocational Resources (SDVR) is located within the Rehabilitation Center for the Blind. People attend Employment Skills Training (EST) at SDVR to learn new skills or re-learn skills that need updating. Employment Skills Training provides a safe environment where learning is comfortable and self-paced. A variety of equipment options are available to help individuals find appropriate accommodations or understand work is possible after they've acquired a disability that impacts their life. Accommodations range from computer adaptations such as Dragon Naturally Speaking, a voice activated computer program; ZoomText speech software; electronic magnifying devices to orthopedic assistive devices such as standing office stations, sit/stand chairs, arm and wrist aids, and much more.

During 2013 the EST program provided training to 79 people; a significant decrease of students after several years of very high numbers of participants. The program received fewer referrals from the rehabilitation counselors, who also saw fewer consumers in 2013.



Megan, a recent student had this to say about her experience:

"My time spent at SDRC was definitely time well spent. At first, I was extremely hesitant to come; it can be hard for someone like me who is stubborn and has wariness of the unknown to step out of their comfort zone. I'm very glad I took the opportunity to come to the center. I have learned so much from being here, to make everyday life a little bit easier in dealing with my visual

impairment, and also learning and utilizing skills I never thought that I would learn but glad I did. I really enjoyed the individualized attention." – Megan

Business Enterprise Program

The Business Enterprise Program (BEP) is designed to provide self-employment opportunities for qualified legally blind individuals. In South Dakota, Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired is the state licensing agency (SLA). The SLA recruits, trains, and licenses legally blind individuals interested in and eligible to participate in the BEP.

This has been a year of change. Two long-time vendor operators retired during the year. One individual was trained and is now running the cafeteria at EROS Data Center near Sioux Falls. Training of a new vendor operator consists of completion of self-study modules and discussion with the BEP Program Manager and then on-the-job training with food service entities and current vendor operators at their locations. All vendor operators must take the ServSafe food safety course and pass the certification exam initially. Recertification is required periodically.

Currently there are five vendors in the program. Two of the vendor operators have cafeterias on federal property and one has a coffee shop in a state building. Two vendor operators' businesses consists of vending only on federal property. At the present time the BEP owns 53 vending machines. These include hot beverage, cold beverage, snack, and combination machines. BEP purchased four new machines this year to replace aging machines. Vendor operators have also made arrangements with private vendors to expand vending in some of their locations.

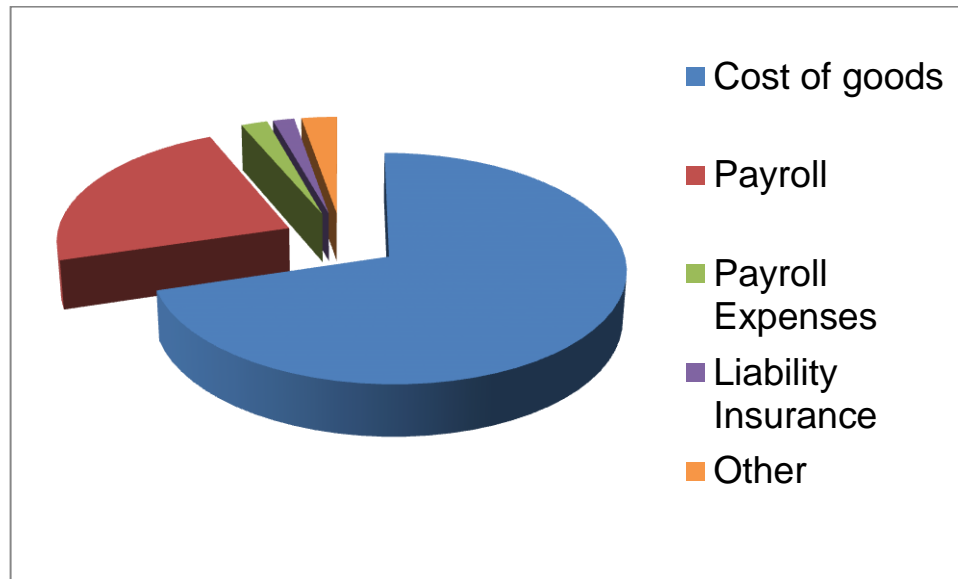


Following is a breakdown of sales and net profits earned by BEP vendors in FFY 2013, and the previous two years.

Earnings and Expenses	2011	2012	2013
1) Gross Sales (total income)	\$529,422	\$515,430	\$442,633
2) Merchandise Purchases	\$266,135	\$272,422	\$234,950
3) Gross Profit	\$263,287	\$243,008	\$207,684
4) Total Operating Expenses	\$174,040	\$158,999	\$100,426
5) Net Proceeds	\$112,655	\$104,668	\$128,660
6) Levied Set Aside Funds	\$13,804	\$15,026	\$15,688
7) Net Profit to Vendors	\$98,851	\$89,642	\$112,972

Business Enterprise Program

Vendor operators experienced a decrease in gross sales for a third year in a row. Gross profit was down by \$35,324. Total operating expenses were \$58,573 less in 2013, resulting in a net profit to vendors of \$112,972, which is \$23,330 more than in 2012. Vendor operators continue to look at ways to reduce their expenses while providing quality food to their customers. Options to increase sales are explored on an ongoing basis.



This chart illustrates the expenses the vendor operators incur in the course of running their businesses. The cost of goods purchased is over seventy percent of the costs as a whole.

Through an agreement with the Department of Transportation, the BEP is responsible for vending at the South Dakota interstate rest areas. Current contracts with vendors for designated rest areas began June 1, 2013. Bids were sought prior to expiration of the old contracts with vendors and contracts were awarded to the vendors who bid to contribute the highest percentage from sales to the BEP. Current commissions paid to the BEP range from 20 to 61 percent. The average rest area commission is 54 percent. Rest area funds assist with expenses of operating the program such as replacement and repair of equipment and vendor benefits.

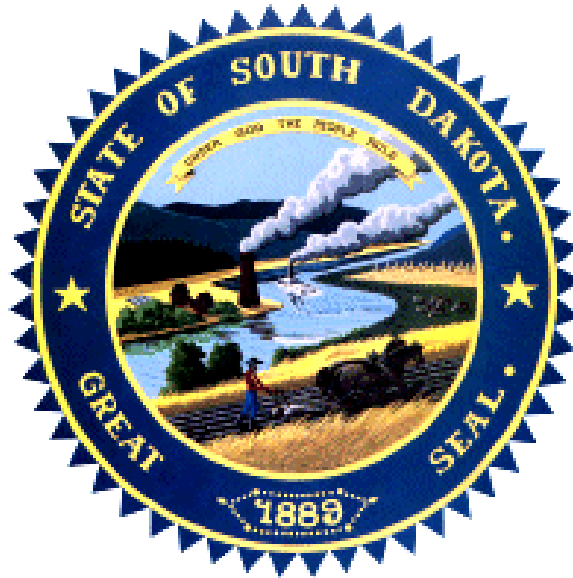


SBVI Offices

<u>SBVI State Office</u> Gaye Mattke, Division Director 3800 E. Hwy 34, c/o 500 East Capitol Pierre, SD 57501-5070 Phone/TTY: (605) 773-4644 Fax: (605) 773-5483 Toll Free: 1-800-265-9684	<u>South Dakota Rehabilitation Center for the Blind</u> Dawn Backer, Rehabilitation Manager 2900 West 11th Street, Suite 101 Sioux Falls, SD 57104 Phone/TTY: (605) 367-5260 Fax: (605) 367-5263 Toll Free: 1-800-658-5441
<u>Aberdeen Office</u> 1707 4th Avenue SE, Suite A Aberdeen, SD 57401 Phone/TTY: (605) 626-2395 / 626-2398 Fax: (605) 626-3089 Toll Free: 1-800-439-3417	<u>Rapid City Office</u> 2330 N. Maple Rapid City, SD 57701 Phone/TTY: (605) 394-2253 / 394-2261 FAX: (605) 394-1659 Toll Free: 1-800-439-8861
<u>Sioux Falls Office</u> 811 East 10 Street, Dept 22 Sioux Falls, SD 57103-1650 Phone/TTY: (605) 367-5330 Fax: (605) 367-5327 Toll Free: 1-800-265-9679	<u>Pierre Office</u> 912 E Sioux Ave c/o 500 E Capitol Pierre, SD 57501-5070 Phone/TTY: (605) 773-3318 Fax: (605) 773-5161 Toll Free: 1-877-873-8500

To find the office that serves your county, go to: <http://dhs.sd.gov/sbvi/county.aspx>





The SBVI Board Annual Report may be accessed electronically at:
<http://dhs.sd.gov/sbvi/regs.aspx>

Contact the SBVI state office to request additional copies or alternative formats of this report.